**EAHR 811 Response – Chapters 7, 8 and 9**

**SQ3R Technique**

As I began to survey and question the three chapters, I generated several questions for myself. From chapter seven, my main questions were how has the expertise-oriented evaluation approach been used and what are the strengths and limitations of the expertise-oriented evaluation approach. From chapter eight, I had many questions but my main question was what is the Stake’s Countenance Framework? Lastly in chapter nine, I was intrigued by the comparative analysis of the alternative evaluation approaches of that analysis what is the purpose of each evaluation approach and what are the distinguishing characteristics. As I actively read through the chapters and began making comparisons to previous knowledge and readings, I began to find the answers to my questions.

**How has the Expertise-Oriented Evaluation Approach been used?**

This evaluation approach has been used by national and regional accreditation agencies. Accreditation can be divided into two types: institutional and specialized or program accreditation. Specialized accreditation processes are said to be more specific, rigorous, and prescriptive than those used in institutional accreditation (p. 122). Specialized accreditation bodies are national in scope and known as major multipurpose professional associations. By contrast, institutional accreditation is generally regional and conducted by agencies that exist solely for that purpose.

House notes several other uses of the expertise-oriented evaluation including university internal-review systems of colleges, departments, and programs and peer reviews by governmental agencies. These professional reviews were used for several internal decisions and reallocating funds and deflected the possibilities of reviews by higher education boards. Panels of prestigious educators have also been used to evaluate agencies producing research and developmental awards.

**What are the Strengths and Limitations of the Expertise-Oriented Evaluation Approach?**

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| **Strengths** | **Limitations** |
| **Accreditation** | **Accreditation** |
| * Fosters excellence in education through criteria and guideline development | * Too expensive to operate under current budgets |
| * Encourages institutional improvement through continual self-study and evaluation | * Not efficient |
| * Assures clearly defined and appropriate educational objectives | * Lacks educational quality |
| * Provides assistance to established and developing institutions | * No suggested weighting of standards from trivial to important |
| * Protects institutions from encroachments | * Fixation on goals that may exclude searching for effects |
|  | * Managerial biases that influence the composition of review teams |
|  | * Processes preclude input from the most severe critics |
| **Informal Professional Review Systems** | **Informal Professional Review Systems** |
| * Cross-validation by multiple observers | * Public suspicion that reviews may be inherently conservative |
| * Maximizes the collection of information in a short time span | * Potentially incestuous |
| * Blends the expertise in evaluation techniques | * Subject to possible conflict of interest |
|  | * Socialization may blunt the important characteristic of detachment. |
|  | * Assumptions and practices may be questioned by outsiders |
|  | * Confidentiality can be another problem |

**What is the Stake’s Countenance Framework?**

Stake’s Countenance Framework attempts to describe the thing being evaluated and render judgment about the thing’s value or worth. This framework assists the evaluator in making data collection and interpretation decisions, and it affords the evaluator the information needed to analyze the level of congruency between intended and actual outcomes, the dependency of outcomes on transactions and antecedents, and the dependency of transactions on antecedents (p. 149). Stake’s input and analysis on evaluation had a major impact on evaluation thinking and laid a powerful conceptual foundation for later developments in the evaluation theory.

**What is the Purpose of each Evaluation Approach and What are the Distinguishing Characteristics?**

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| Approach | Purpose | Distinguishing Characteristic |
| Objectives - Oriented | * Determining the extent to which objectives achieved | * Specifying measurable objectives; using objectives; looking for discrepancies |
| Management-Oriented | * Providing useful information to aid in making decisions | * Serving rational decision making; evaluating at all stages |
| Consumer-Oriented | * Providing information about products to aid decision making | * Using criterion checklists to analyze products |
| Expertise-Oriented | * Providing professional judgements of quality | * Basing judgements on individual knowledge |
| Participant-Oriented | * Understanding and portraying the complexities of programmatic activity | * Reflecting multiple realities; use of inductive reasoning and discovery |

**PART II – Personal Response**

Based on this week’s readings, I am drawn much more to chapter seven and the information presented on accreditation. I have been made aware of accreditation in my profession as a dental assistant. Through my casual employment in the dental division at SIAST, I have become even more aware of the accreditation process and the standards expected at SIAST. The dental assisting and dental hygiene programs both are reviewed by an accreditation committee on a regular basis to ensure that they are meeting industry requirements. Even though I know that the programs undergo accreditation reviews and that program requirements and procedures must adhere to accreditation standards, I lacked the formal information on what accreditation actually is and what is involved in the process. When I entered this class on program evaluation, I never considered accreditation with the context of being a form of program evaluation.

As I read, I was very intrigued to learn the historical focus of accreditation including the adequacy of facilities, qualifications of staff, and perceived appropriateness of the processes used, rather than program outcomes. As I reflect on the methods SIAST uses for accreditation in the dental programs I see many of these elements being evaluated. However, I really see Scriven’s distinctive features of contemporary accreditation which include:

1. A set of published standards
2. A self-study by the institution
3. A team of external assessors
4. A site visit
5. A site-team report on the institution including recommendations
6. A review report by a distinguished panel
7. A final report and accreditation decision by the accrediting body (p. 117).

As noted, not every accreditation system follows this prescription completely. However, this is an excellent description of most systems today. In the dental area, the programs have a set of published standards that are also shared with the provincial licensing authorities. I am unsure how extensive the self study is of the program is, because many of the staff have been employed in the area for 20-30 years. I am aware thought that a team of external assessors exists and a site visit is conducted approximately once every four years. Following the last visit, a very thorough site report was completed including minimal recommendations for the program areas. The recommendations were mainly focused on infection control procedures, occupational health and safety, and ergonomic issues.

Now that I am more aware of accreditation and its relationship with program evaluation, I plan to inquire about the process with respect to the dental division. I also hope that I can be a participant in the next site visit now that I am employed on a casual basis. Considering I still spend time working directly in industry (private practice), I feel that my input at a site want and I am also aware of the program is actually offering. Potentially my input may be able to close some of the gaps in information that exist.

**References**

Fitzpatrick, J.L., Sanders, J.R., & Worthern, B.R. (2004). *Program evaluation: Alternative approaches and practical guidelines.* Boston: Pearson Education, Inc.